tax is levied by the State Governments and no data is maintained by the Central Government on the tax collected by State Governments. A Committee for the Development of the Entertainment Sector was set up in January 2001, under the Chairmanship of the Minister for Information and Broadcasting in Government of India with nine State Ministers of Information as members, *inter alia* to suggest a policy framework both at the Centre and in the States conducive to promoting the entertainment sector. The Committee in its second meeting held on 8.11.2001, *inter alia,* recommended that all State Governments fix their entertainment tax within a ceiling of 60%. In response to this recommendation, several State Governments have reduced the rates of entertainment tax in their States. In its third meeting held on 13-10-2003, the Committee recommended a further reduction of the ceiling on entertainment tax rates for films from 60% to 45% by the State Governments as lower entertainment tax is expected to increase theatre attendance and deter piracy, thereby increasing the State Government's tax collections over a period of time. The recommendation of the Committee has been circulated to all State Governments.

Free to air DTH services

2111. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry is very soon going to approach the Cabinet for its consent on the Prasar Bharati's proposal to start free to air DTH services in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof,

(c) the allocation received from the Planning Commission to implement this project; and

(d) whether any time-frame has been fixed for providing this service?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) Doordarshan's Pilot project of "Ku-band transmission" has been approved by the Government. Thirty free-to-air channels are expected to be broadcast under the scheme.

(c) The approved cost of the Pilot project is Rs. 164.35 crores.

(d) The transmission is expected to commence during 2004.

Vacant Posts

†2112. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the posts vacant in his Ministry and since when;

(b) the reasons therefor and also the reasons for not filling up of these vacancies; and

(c) by when, Government would fill up these vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) A total number of 18 posts are vacant in the Ministry. The details of occurrence of the vacancy, reasons therefor and steps taken to fill them are given in the statement enclosed.

Statement

Details of Vacancies in the M/o Information and Broadcasting

Name of the Post	No. of vacant posts	Date of occurrence of vacancy	Reasons for occurrence of vacancy and also reasons for not filling up the vacant posts
1	2	3	4
Joint Secretary	1	21.11.03	Transfer of incumbent. Substitute has already been selected and is likely to join shortly.
Director/Deputy Secretary	2	(i) 14.10.03 (ii) 20.10.03	(i) Completion of tenure of the incumbent. (ii) Proceeding on foreign training of the incumbent. Both the posts are being filled under Central Staffing Scheme and Department of Personnel & Training has been requested to send panel for this purpose.

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.